

Moran Announces Approval of U.S. Beef Report by Japanese Food Safety Commission

Brings U.S. One Step Closer to Resuming Beef Exports to Japan

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced the approval by the Japanese Food Safety Commission of a report on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) that concluded the risk level of U.S. beef is minimal. The report proposes an end to the import ban on U.S. beef 20 months and younger.

"This approval brings Japan and the U.S. one step closer to resuming trade of American beef," Moran said. "While it is not a total victory, the Japanese government is moving in the right direction. We will continue our efforts with the hope of having U.S. beef back in Japanese households as soon as possible."

This move today by the Japanese comes after a five-month review of the safety of U.S. beef by a Japanese BSE panel who reported their findings Monday. With the full commission's approval today, the Japanese government now begins four weeks of public hearings, scheduled to end November 29. These hearings must be completed before Japan's Health and Agriculture Ministries can recommend any official action to remove the ban on U.S. beef.

A single case of BSE in a Canadian-born animal prompted Japan to close its border to U.S. beef in December 2003. Moran's efforts leading up to the Japanese announcement began in March and include his introduction of a resolution calling for sanctions to be used against Japan if it failed to abide by its October 2004 agreement to reopen its border. More than 80 of Moran's colleagues joined the effort by cosponsoring his resolution. In addition, Moran met with President Bush and U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman to discuss this issue and led more than 100 Members of Congress in asking President Bush to make restoring market access for U.S. beef to Japan his highest economic priority. He also recently highlighted the importance of this issue in testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee and in a speech to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Moran is senior member of the House Agriculture Committee.

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